

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of producing a heating roller, comprising:
drawing a core of hollow cylinder form; and
cutting an outer circumference surface of the core;
wherein a thickness of the core is greater in a center portion thereof than in end portions thereof, and
~~wherein the core is configured to receive a heat element within an interior thereof~~
wherein the core is provided with bearings on the outer circumference surface thereof.
2. (Original) The method of producing a heating roller of claim 1, wherein in the drawing step, the core is drawn such that an inside diameter of the core is smaller in the center portion thereof than in the both end portions thereof.
3. (Original) The method of producing a heating roller of claim 1, wherein in the cutting step, the core is cut such that an outside diameter of the core is substantially constant in a shaft direction of the core.
4. (Currently Amended) A method of producing a heating roller, comprising:
drawing a core of hollow cylinder form; and
cutting an outer circumference surface of the core;
wherein a thickness of the core is greater in a center portion thereof than in end portions thereof, and
wherein in the cutting step, the core is cut such that an outside diameter of the core is smaller in the center portion thereof than in the end portions thereof, and
wherein the core is provided with bearings on the outer circumference surface thereof.

5. (Currently Amended) A method of producing a heating roller, comprising:
drawing a core of hollow cylinder form; and
cutting an outer circumference surface of the core;
wherein a thickness of the core is greater in a center portion thereof than in end portions thereof, ~~and~~
wherein a difference of the thickness of the core between the end portions and the center portion thereof is set such that a nip width at the center portion thereof is substantially the same as that at the end portions thereof, and such that a difference of a temperature in a longitudinal direction of the heating roller, as the temperature is rising, is within a predetermined range, and

wherein the core is provided with bearings on the outer circumference surface thereof.

6. (Previously Presented) The method of producing a heating roller of claim 5, wherein in the drawing step, the core is drawn such that an inside diameter of the core is smaller in the center portion thereof than in the both end portions thereof.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of producing a heating roller of claim 5, wherein in the cutting step, the core is cut such that an outside diameter of the core is substantially constant in a shaft direction of the core.

8. (Previously Presented) The method of producing a heating roller of claim 5, wherein in the cutting step, the core is cut such that an outside diameter of the core is smaller in the center portion thereof than in the end portions thereof.

9. (Currently Amended) A method of producing a heating roller, comprising:
drawing a core of hollow cylinder form; and
cutting an outer circumference surface of the core;

wherein a thickness of the core is greater in a center portion thereof than in end portions thereof, and

wherein the core is ~~configured to be~~ provided with bearings on the outer circumference surface thereof.

10. (Previously Presented) The method of producing a heating roller of claim 9, wherein in the drawing step, the core is drawn such that an inside diameter of the core is smaller in the center portion thereof than in the both end portions thereof.

11. (Previously Presented) The method of producing a heating roller of claim 9, wherein in the cutting step, the core is cut such that an outside diameter of the core is substantially constant in a shaft direction of the core.

12. (Previously Presented) The method of producing a heating roller of claim 9, wherein in the cutting step, the core is cut such that an outside diameter of the core is smaller in the center portion thereof than in the end portions thereof.

13. (Currently Amended) The method of producing a heating roller of claim 9, wherein the core is ~~configured to be~~ provided with a drive gear on the outer circumference surface thereof.

14. (Previously Presented) The method of producing a heating roller of claim 9, wherein the bearings are attached to the outer circumference surface of the core via heat insulation bushes.